

Notes From Community Forum
October 20, 2011
Lamoine Consolidated School

Attendance: @ 30 community members

LAC members: Brett Jones, Gordon Donaldson, Nate Mason, Ann McCann

Opening remarks by Brett Jones: para-phrased by note taker

I. How system works

Weighted vote – Lamoine is 8.7% -population/census

Cost sharing – based on student population

What happens if Ellsworth withdraws? RSU sustainable financially?

Board has sub-committees

Brett cannot serve on all – he does serve on finance, educational programming and long range planning

II. Changes

Local board more responsive to Lamoine specifically

Larger RSU board is much more cumbersome

Local budget development allowed school and community to decide, now decisions made on much larger scale

Positive aspects:

Economy of scale – better purchasing power

Ability to pay in a timely manner reduces costs

Common curriculum

III. Worries

Loss of small school identity and wishes of town

(i.e. school choice) did end up okay afterall

Ellsworth withdrawal and ramifications

Personnel loss – staffing gaps

Long range plans from closings to combining to redrawing boundary lines

Notes from the Tables

Governance

Plusses:

Staff engaged in summer work with cross-district teachers

Deltas:

Attracting and keeping staff < <

Representation by weighted vote <

Participation at meetings is nil

Distancing in desire to attend RSUB meetings

Feeling of no voice/vote <<

Disenfranchised

Little to no influence over direction of funds

Loss of federal money for small schools

Not much connection between communities

Loss of communication

Relationship and access to central office personnel diminished

Little effort seen to include small communities

Staffs/administrators across RSU have differing philosophies

Decision making is sometimes urgent and made by a few

Tasks that should be simple are much more complex – a lot more layers

Cost

Plusses:

Some assistance from state as a subsidy as a result of being an RSU

Deltas:

We pay what we are told to pay

Loss of \$ from government (small schools)

More questions:

Is education the same for our expenditures now as before?

Is more available (opportunities) for our students as was promised?

What savings?

How find out how much it costs to run LCS?

David Bridgham, Chief Financial Officer for the RSU explained the difficulty in separating certain cost centers from the whole.

Closing Thoughts:

What are the town's goals for our school?

What do we want?

What is the best way to do that?

Address errors or omissions to Ann McCann – note taker